

Board of Physical Therapy

Guidance on Electromyography (EMG) and Sharp Debridement in the Practice of Physical Therapy

Electromyography (EMG)

Electromyography (EMG) is an invasive procedure and, in accordance with § 54.1-3482 of the Code of Virginia, requires physician referral and direction. A physician order for EMG should be in writing; if the initial referral is received orally, it must be followed up with a written referral. The procedure is an advanced skill and only within the scope of practice for those physical therapists who have had specialized, post-professional preparation and training.

Sharp Debridement

Sharp debridement is an invasive procedure and, in accordance with § 54.1-3482 of the Code of Virginia, requires physician referral and direction. Sharp debridement requires specific skills and training in wound care and on-going evaluation by the physical therapist. If, in the professional judgment of the physical therapist responsible for the patient, the physical therapist assistant has the competency, advanced skills, and post entry-level training to perform sharp debridement, it may be delegated to the assistant.